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10/815,067	03/31/2004	Kenneth Lawrence Young	MSFT-3486/307557.01	7859
41505 7590 02/25/2011 WOODCOCK WASHBURN LLP (MICROSOFT CORPORATION) CIRA CENTRE, 12TH FLOOR 2929 ARCH STREET PHILADELPHIA, PA 19104-2891				
EXAMINER				
BELOUSOV, ANDREY				
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2174				
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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

eoofficemonitor@woodcock.com

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/815,067

Applicant(s)

YOUNG ET AL

Examiner

ANDREY BELOUSOV

Art Unit

2174

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 April 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 29-33 and 35-48 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 29-33 and 35-48 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-945)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/22/2010
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

This action is responsive the amendment filed on 4/21/2010. Claims 29-33, 35-48 are pending.

#### ***Claim Objections***

Claim 32 is objected to because of the following informalities: "scans" should probably be "spans." Appropriate correction is required.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 29-33, 35-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Excel (Microsoft® Excel 2000, Copyright (c) 1985-1999 Microsoft Corp.) in view of another embodiment in Excel.

**Claim 29:** Excel discloses a grid canvas, comprising

a canvas (Fig. 5: white surface area);

gridlines (Fig. 5: gridlines between A and B, C and D, 1 and 2, and 5 and 6) that define rows and columns (Fig. 5: columns A-D, and rows 1-6) on the canvas such that an intersection of the rows and columns form multiple cells (Fig. 5: B2, C2, B3, C3, B4,

C4, B5, C5) on the canvas, wherein each of the gridlines are configured separately with respective sizing information (Fig. 5, the gridlines can be moved up / down, left / right individually), and wherein the gridlines are components on the canvas (Fig. 5);

a user-interface element (Fig. 5: crate image) that spans the multiple cells on the canvas, wherein the user-interface element is a component on the canvas (Fig. 5);

a bounding box (Fig. 5: bolded square) of at least four gridlines (Fig. 5: four gridlines between A and B, C and D, 1 and 2, and 5 and 6) that form the multiple cells that the user-interface element spans (Fig. 5),

wherein a relationship (Fig. 5, a particular location of the crate within the bounding box) between the user-interface element and the bounding box is defined by four margins (Fig. 5: the crate is attached in a particular location within the bounding box with visible margins from the bottom, top, left and right), each margin respectively defining a distance (Fig. 5, however many pixels as seen) between the user-interface element and one of the at least four gridlines of the bounding box (Fig. 5), wherein the user-interface element is attached within the bounding box based on the relationship (Fig. 5: relationship is shown by the crate being within a particular location within the bounding box) between the user-interface element and the bounding box,

wherein a margin (which margin? one of the four? or just any margin?) is any of a fixed, auto (Fig. 5: displays a number of possible margins that may have a fixed, a percentage of another distance or length value), percentage, or weighted value,

wherein, if a modification (Fig. 7-8: e.g. resizing; a modification of narrowing the bounding box, as shown in Fig. 8, with the "Move and size with cells" option enabled) is

made to any of the components (Fig. 7-8, to the bounding box which is one of any components on the canvas) on the canvas, the relationship between user-interface element (Fig. 6-8, the crate) and the bounding box is maintained (Fig. 6-7: if the values of the margins is percent based then the location of the crate within the bounding box is maintained in proportion to the margins) in accordance with the value of each of the four margins, and

wherein the relationship between the user-interface element and the bounding box is such that the components (Fig. 5: the crate and the bounding box) are redefined (Fig. 5-9: the bounding box is narrowed, and the user-interface element is also narrowed) to reflect both the modification (Fig. 6-8: narrowing of the bounding box) and the relationships between the user-interface element and the bounding box (Fig. 8: the crate is narrowed in response, given the relationship) the user-interface element remaining attached accordingly within the bounding box (Fig. 8: the crate is still attached within the bounding box.)

However, Excel does not explicitly disclose wherein the relationship is bi-directional such that resizing the user-interface element will move the gridline. Excel discloses in another embodiment that the resizing of a user-interface element (such as the crate) would move a gridline type component, such as shown in Fig. 9 by the dotted lines (Fig. 7: 70, Fig. 10; changing the size via the "Size" panel, moves the gridlines surrounding the element correspondingly.) Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the two teachings in Excel in a fashion that the virtual gridline (such as one between

columns B and C) would move in accordance with the changes in the element size. One would have been motivated to combine the teachings of Excel so as to dynamically and continuously encapsulate the element within the cell as the element and/or gridline is changed.

**Claim 30:** Excel discloses the grid canvas according to claim 29, wherein a gridline is defined by at least one of: a row; a column; or at least one row and at least one column (Fig. 5.)

**Claim 31:** Excel discloses the grid canvas according to claim 30, wherein the row or the column are, respectively, a virtual row or virtual column (Fig. 5.)

**Claim 32:** Excel discloses the grid canvas according to claim 29, further comprising a second gridline bounding box (Fig. 5, bolded box) that includes a second user-interface element that spans the same or at least a portion of the multiple cells (Fig. 5, any number of UI elements, with their own respective gridline bounding boxes such as to span any particular cells, can be dropped, much like the crate, on the canvas. However, the claim language is not definitive whether the second gridline bounding box is displayed concurrently with the first gridline bounding box.)

**Claim 33:** Excel discloses the grid canvas according to claim 32, wherein the bounding box comprises a plurality of rows (Fig. 5, 2-5) and columns (Fig. 1, B-C) that contain the user-interface element.

**Claim 35:** Excel discloses the grid canvas according to claim 29, wherein a gridline defines a border of the canvas (Fig. 5.)

**Claim 36:** Excel discloses the grid canvas according to claim 29, wherein the relationship of the gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas is defined as an explicit value (Fig. 8 Width: 14.00 (103 pixels).)

**Claim 37:** Excel discloses the grid canvas according to claim 29, wherein the relationship of the gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas is defined as an auto value (the width of cells (elements) is an auto default of 64 pixels wide; Fig. 5.)

**Claim 38:** Excel discloses a method for creating a grid canvas, comprising

- a. identifying a canvas (Fig. 5: white surface area. Identification (by Excel) is inherent in order to display the program on the display as shown);
- b. defining a virtual gridline (Fig. 5: gridline between B and C) on the canvas, wherein the virtual gridline is one of a plurality of components (Fig. 5: cells, tabs, etc.) on the canvas;

- c. identifying a user-interface element (an element with which a user can interface (i.e. interact) Fig. 5: box) that spans multiple cells on the canvas, wherein the user-interface element is one of the plurality of components on the canvas and may be placed on the canvas at least one of:
  - a. before the virtual gridline is defined, or
  - b. after the virtual gridline is defined (Fig. 5, the element was placed after the default virtual gridline is displayed in Excel on startup);
- d. identifying a property (i.e. location of the gridline on the canvas as explicitly shown by the Width: 14.00 (103 pixels), See Fig. 7) set (i.e. set by the user, such as by moving the gridline, Fig. 6-8) for the virtual gridline, wherein the property defines a relationship (e.g. geometric, See Fig. 7) of the virtual gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas;
- e. changing a property of at least one of: the canvas, or the at least one of the plurality of components on the canvas (e.g. Fig. 1: expanding cell D10); and
- f. determining a layout (i.e. arrangement, taking up more or less space on the canvas, Fig. 6-8) of the user-interface element on the canvas, wherein the layout of the user-interface element is determined by the property set for the gridline (moving the gridline to the left as shown in Fig. 8, minimizes the user interface element, thereby changing its layout on the canvas);
- g. maintaining the relationship of the virtual gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas (Fig. 1.) wherein the relationship is such that:
  - a. moving the gridline will resize the user-interface element (Fig. 6-8.)

However, Excel does not explicitly disclose wherein the relationship is bi-directional such that resizing the user-interface element will move the gridline. Excel discloses in another embodiment that the resizing of a user-interface element (such as the crate) would move a gridline type component, such as shown in Fig. 9 by the dotted lines (Fig. 7: 70, Fig. 10; changing the size via the "Size" panel, moves the gridlines surrounding the element correspondingly.) Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the two teachings in Excel in a fashion that the virtual gridline (such as one between columns B and C) would move in accordance with the changes in the element size. One would have been motivated to combine the teachings of Excel so as to dynamically and continuously encapsulate the element within the cell as the element and/or gridline is changed.

**Claim 39:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, wherein the step of identifying a relationship of the virtual gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas is repeated for a plurality of virtual gridlines and a plurality of user-interface elements (Fig. 1. It is inherent that a plurality of elements can be placed on the canvas. Identification (by Excel) is inherent in order to display the program on the display as shown.)

**Claim 40:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, further comprising adding a virtual gridline dynamically (i.e. continuously) to the canvas (Fig. 5: changes in the cells cause dynamic updating of gridlines.)

**Claim 41:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, further comprising: overlaying a grid on the canvas (Fig. 5), wherein the grid comprises a plurality of virtual gridlines (Fig. 5); identifying a relationship (Fig. 5: position of the gridline to the boundary of the element) of at least one of the plurality of virtual gridlines to at least one of the plurality of components on the canvas.

**Claim 42:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, further comprising adding a component on the grid (Fig. 1. It is inherent that a plurality of additional components can be placed on the canvas, such as the "2+2" element.)

**Claim 43:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, further comprising: placing the virtual gridline on the canvas according to a predetermined relationship of the virtual gridline to at least one of the plurality of components on the canvas (gridline is placed to outline the cells: Fig. 1.)

**Claim 44:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, further comprising placing the virtual gridline on the canvas (selection of "Gridlines" options overlays a grid, Fig. 2); identifying a relationship of the virtual gridline to at least one of the plurality of

components on the canvas according to the placement of the gridline on the canvas (Fig. 1: position of the gridline to the boundary of the element.)

**Claim 45:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, further comprising adding a component to the canvas; maintaining the relationship of the virtual gridline to the element on the canvas (Fig. 1: It is inherent that a plurality of additional components can be placed on the canvas, such as the “2+2” element.)

**Claim 46:** Excel discloses the method according to claim 38, wherein the virtual gridline is defined by a plurality of rows and columns (Fig. 5) that define a plurality of virtual cells (Fig. 1: A1-H25), and at least one of the plurality of components (Fig. 3: “USPTO banner”) spans a plurality of the virtual cells (Fig. 3: B14-H16.)

**Claim 47:** Excel discloses the method of claim 46, further comprising adding a component to the canvas, wherein the added component inhabits at least one of the same cells of the plurality of virtual cells inhabited by the at least one of the plurality of components (Fig. 4.)

**Claim 48:** Excel discloses the method of claim 38, further comprising determining a virtual gridline bounding box for the element (Fig. 5: bolded box.)

***Response to Arguments***

2. Applicant's arguments filed 4/21/2010 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues,

A: that Excel "does not have the ability to define four margins with respect to a user-interface element that spans multiple cells"

B: "each margin respectively defining a distance between the user-interface element and one of the four gridlines,"

C: "where the cells are defined using fixed, auto, percentage, or weighted values, where four margins are defined."

The Examiner respectfully disagrees. With respect to A, once a user interface is placed on the canvas and spans the multiple cells, then by this location and the distances, the relationship is defined including the margins of the user-interface to the gridlines. It is uncertain what more the applicant is hoping from "defining" of a margin with respect to a user-interface, however such additional limitations would need to be spelled out in the claims. Similarly, with respect to B, a margin is a definition of a distance, particularly to the example shown in Excel, as between the user-interface and the gridlines. With respect to C, claim 29 does not appear to have any limitation that the cells are defined using fixed, auto, percentage, or weighted values. Furthermore, the limitation "wherein a margin is any of a fixed, auto, percentage, or weighted value" in claim 29, does not appear to link that "a margin" to any previously mentioned margin (i.e., the four margins.)

Applicant further argues that Excel provides no control over the anchoring process, or teach the range of anchorage covered by the claims. The Examiner respectfully disagrees. Claim 29 as recited uses "attachment" rather than "anchoring." Regardless, claim 29 does not recite any limitation with respect to controlling the attachment, beyond the limitation that such attachment is "based" in some fashion on the relationship (particular location) between the UI element and the bounding box (see claim 29 above.) The attachment disclosed by Excel may be nothing more than dropping an UI element on the canvas so that it spans multiple cells, i.e. it does not have to be an explicit "attachment" such as to perhaps have explicit controls to modify this "attachment" via a dialog box. The Examiner does not see, "the range of anchorage [sic] covered by the claims" in the claim language of claim 29. Neither are "parameters of attachment" cited in the claim language of claim 29.

### ***Conclusion***

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andrew Belousov whose telephone number is (571) 270-1695. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (alternate Fri off) EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dennis Chow can be reached on (571) 272-7767. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-3800. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published

applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Andrey Belousov/

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2/22/2011